

Appl. No. 10/807,211
Amdt. Dated June 28, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 3, 2006

REMARKS

Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4-16, and 18-20; and has added new claim 21.

Claim Objection

Responsive to the objection of claims 2, 4-13, 15 and 18-20, Applicant has canceled claim 19, and has amended claims 2, 4-13, 15, 18 and 20 by changing the term "as described in claim" to "as claimed in claim". As such, Applicant submits that the objection to the claims has been successfully overcome and that such claims are now in allowable form.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 102

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1, 5, 8-12, 14-16, 18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Fukiharu (USPN 6,435,687), Applicant has amended claims 1, 14 and 16, and otherwise respectfully traverses the rejection of such claims.

Independent claim 1, as currently amended, recites in part:

"...a light reflector substantially juxtaposed with the light guide plate, the light reflector having a reflecting portion obliquely opposite to the light incident surface along a lengthwise direction of the light incident surface..."(Emphasis added)

Applicants submit that such a surface lighting device as set forth in claim 1, as amended, is neither taught, disclosed, nor suggested by Fukiharu or any of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Appl. No. 10/807,211
Amtd. Dated June 28, 2006
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Fukiharu discloses a reflection illumination device including a light guide 12, light sources 16, and reflecting members 19 to prevent illumination light from leaking outside from the periphery of the light guide 12. As shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, the reflecting members 19 are mounted on the light guide 12 in an inclined state along a thickness direction of the light guide 12 or along a widthwise direction of a light incident surface of the light guide 12, and not along a lengthwise direction of the light incident surface. That is, Fukiharu fails to disclose or suggest a subject matter as set forth in claim 1, as currently amended.

Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 1, as currently amended, is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

Applicant further submits dependent claims 5 and 8-12, based on their dependency on claim 1, are now also in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 14, as currently amended, recites in part:

“...wherein, the light guide plate, the mount portion and the light reflector cooperate together to define a closed space therebetween, said space being tapered in a direction away from the point light source.” (Emphasis added.)

Applicant submits that such a surface lighting device as set forth in claim 14, as currently amended, is neither taught, disclosed, nor suggested by Fukiharu or any of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Appl. No. 10/807,211
Amdt. Dated June 28, 2006
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Fukiharu discloses that the reflecting member 19 has holding portions 19a and 19b for holding the light sources 16, and each of them has a cross-section in the form of a quadratic curve. Specifically, as shown in FIG. 1, a space among the light guide 12, the reflecting members 19, and the holding portions 19a and 19b is essentially of rectangular configuration and is not tapered in a direction away from the point light source. That is, Fukiharu fails to disclose or suggest a subject matter as set forth in claim 14, as currently amended.

Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 14, as currently amended, is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

Applicant further submits dependent claim 15, based on its dependency on claim 14, is now also in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 16, as currently amended, recites in part:

“...a light guide plate having a light incident surface; and a light reflector coupled with the light guide plate and having a sidewall opposite to the light incident surface; wherein, one end of the sidewall connects with the light incident surface, an opposite end of the sidewall is spaced apart from the light incident surface, a point light source is provided between the opposite end of the sidewall and the light incident surface.” (Emphasis added.)

Applicant submits that such a surface lighting device as set forth in claim 16, as amended, is neither taught, disclosed, nor suggested by Fukiharu or any of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination.

Appl. No. 10/807,211
Amdt. Dated June 28, 2006
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Fukiharu discloses that, as seen in Column 3, lines 60+, the reflecting member 19 has holding portions 19a and 19b corresponding to the edges 12a and 12b of the light guide 12 for holding the light sources 16. The holding portions 19a and 19b are mounted on the light guide 12. However, as shown in FIG. 1, a given reflecting surface 19a, 19b of the reflecting members 19, which is opposite to (i.e., directed toward) the corresponding light incident surface 12a, 12b of the light guide 12, extends essentially parallel and adjacent to a given light incident surface 12a, 12b. More specifically, the two opposite ends of the respective reflecting surfaces 19a, 19b are both in contact with the corresponding light incident surface 12a, 12b. Hence, Fukiharu fails to disclose or suggest the subject matter as set forth in claim 16, as currently amended.

Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 16, as currently amended, is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

Applicant further submits dependent claims 18 and 20, based on their dependency on claim 16, are now also in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 6,435,687B1 to Fukiharu in view of USPN 6,277,471B1 to Tang. However, claim 2 depends directly from claim 1, which is in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 2 is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

Appl. No. 10/807,211
Amdt. Dated June 28, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 3, 2006

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 6,435,687B1 to Fukihru in view of USPN 6,867,826B2 to Miyashita. However, claim 6 depends directly from claim 1, which is in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 6 is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 7, 13 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 6,435,687B1 to Fukihru. However, claims 4, 7 and 13 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, which is in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 4, 7 and 13 are now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

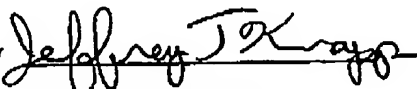
Further, claim 19 depends directly from claim 14, which is in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 19 is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

New claim 21, the subject matter thereof being derived from original claim 16, depends directly from claim 16, which is in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 21 is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

Appl. No. 10/807,211
Amtd. Dated June 28, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 3, 2006

In view of the foregoing, the present application as defined in the pending claims is considered to be in a condition for allowance, and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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